

Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 870, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 28, S. 870, a bill to amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize appropriations for the United States Fire Administration and firefighter assistance grant programs.

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, all postclosure time is expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 870) to amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize appropriations for the United States Fire Administration and firefighter assistance grant programs.

AMENDMENT NO. 58

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk, and I ask that it be reported by number.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] proposes an amendment numbered 58.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To add an effective date)

At the end add the following:

SEC. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 11:45 a.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 69, Richard R. Verma, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources; that there be 5 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form, on the nomination; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when I took the gavel as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, one of my first goals and objectives was to restore the committee's oversight role.

Since the beginning of the 117th Congress, we have kept a close watch on those Agencies in the executive branch which are within our jurisdiction. We have held oversight hearings on the Justice Department, the FBI, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, to mention a few. This last Tuesday, we continued that tradition with a second oversight hearing on the Department of Homeland Security.

It is worth noting that, under the previous administration, the previous President, the Homeland Security Secretary only appeared before our committee one time in 4 years. So we were glad to welcome Secretary Mayorkas back to the hearing room and learn about the work that he is undertaking to keep America safe.

As I mentioned on Tuesday, I think Secretary Mayorkas has one of the hardest jobs in Washington. The Department of Homeland Security is responsible for defending our Nation from a wide range of threats from domestic terrorism, narcotics trafficking, the climate crisis, and even cyber attacks. But, despite this broad mandate, our discussion kept returning to one subject last Tuesday: America's broken immigration system.

It was interesting to hear the Republican Senators on my committee being critical of the job that Mr. Mayorkas is doing as head of the DHS while, at the same time, it has been over 30 years since this body, the U.S. Senate, has enacted legislation to upgrade and modernize our immigration system—30 years. Trust me. The world has changed dramatically in that period, but the Senate has refused to keep pace.

It is easy to criticize Secretary Mayorkas about our border situation, and he faces some amazing challenges. But let's face it. We share in the responsibility for this situation, and we certainly share in the burden of coming up with solutions that help.

For years, I have tried my best to pass appropriations reform. There was a bipartisan moment 10 years ago when the so-called Gang of Eight Senators—four Democrats, four Republicans, and I was included in that group—sat down and wrote a comprehensive immigration reform package. I think it was pretty good. In fact, it was so good that it passed on the floor of the U.S. Senate with over 60 votes in favor of it.

We had our fingers crossed and sent it across the Rotunda over to the Republican-controlled House, and, for 2 years, they refused to even consider it,

even call it for a debate, or even offer their own amendments. They did nothing—nothing—and we are paying the price for that today.

So here is the question after this week's hearing: Are we going to keep pointing our fingers and mugging for the cameras or are we going to come together to fix our immigration system?

I am ready. I certainly hope the Members of the House are ready. But we need a bipartisan consensus to get that done.

RESTORING AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE AND READINESS ACT

On another topic, Mr. President, it is a problem I am going to discuss that affects roughly 100 million Americans. In the wealthiest Nation in the world, nearly one in three people in this Nation lives in an area with too few doctors.

You know the story in your home State of Georgia. I know it in Illinois. I have seen it. Whenever I visit a clinic or a hospital outside of Chicago, I hear the same thing: Our healthcare system is understaffed, underfunded, and underequipped to address the health needs of American families.

The greatest healthcare system in the world is suffering from serious shortages and deficiencies. The pandemic brought this to light. It may not have broken us, but it showed us where our health system is broken.

Over the past 3 years, our doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers have been pushed to the brink, and, as a result, nearly one out of every five healthcare workers has quit their jobs. Think about that: 20 percent quit their jobs.

These departures have taken a massive toll in the healthcare of America. In the years ahead, as our population ages, our needs grow, and more providers leave the profession. Those challenges will get worse unless we in Congress do something.

In the next decade, America is expected to face a shortage of more than 120,000 doctors. By 2025, we may face a deficit of nearly a half a million nurses. And that is on top of our current shortage of about 100,000 dentists that we need now and hundreds of thousands of mental healthcare professionals.

This is a ticking timebomb for every community in America, especially rural communities and communities of color that already have less access to affordable care.

So here in Congress, we need to prevent these shortages from becoming a crisis. Earlier this month, MARCO RUBIO, Republican of Florida, and I joined in introducing the Restoring America's Health Care Workforce and Readiness Act. It is a bipartisan measure to address the healthcare work shortage in America. Over the next 3 years, our bill would provide hundreds of millions of dollars to the National Health Service Corps Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program, more than doubling the current funding level.

This program is vital to pay for the education and training and recruitment of the next generation of doctors, nurses, dentists, and behavioral health specialists.

Why is this program, in particular, so important? Let me tell you, one of the biggest drivers of the American healthcare shortage is the cost of medical education. Doctors graduating from medical school with \$200,000 or \$300,000 in student loan debt or more can hardly consider taking posts in rural and underserved areas. They have got to pay off those loans. So because of those debts, they may not be able to do what they want to do—give care and professional treatment to some of the most needy people in America. We take our best and brightest, we educate them so well, but we heap debt on them unimaginable that makes a real difference in their career choices.

So with the National Health Service Corps and Nurse Corps, aspiring health professionals have another option. If they will serve in areas of need, we will forgive student loans—in fact, in some cases, providing scholarships for those who are in medical training.

The National Health Service Corps was created 50 years ago. More recently, we have seen the difference it can make. In the American Rescue Plan that Congress passed in 2021, I included a one-time, \$1 billion funding increase for scholarships and loan repayments for the National Health Service Corps. It was the largest single-year appropriation for our healthcare force in history. At this very moment, that funding is supporting thousands—thousands—of doctors, nurses, dentists, and other professionals across America. Today, 21 million Americans receive healthcare from the National Health Service Corps personnel.

I recently received a letter from one of those who provide that kind of healthcare. Her name is Shannon. She is a licensed clinical social worker in Illinois. She is a first-generation college student from a working-class family. She tells me her life-long dream was to have a professional career in social work, but her ambitions were limited because of the cost of graduate school. She just couldn't imagine taking on that debt.

Then, in July of 2022, she found a path forward. She was accepted into the program I described. In Shannon's words, "being accepted into this program has changed my life. . . . [It] has given me a chance at financial freedom . . . [and] professionally, this program allowed me to grow into my career."

Today, Shannon is working as a behavioral healthcare provider in Carbondale, IL, in wonderful Jackson County.

In Shannon's words, this role allows her to "come into contact . . . with those in rural southern Illinois who are in great need of behavioral health services, such as counseling."

It is hard to imagine a better investment in America's future than pro-

grams like the National Health Service Corps and Nurse Corps. In Shannon's case, this program enabled her to pursue her life-long passion. The community is winning. Shannon is winning. It is a win-win situation.

We need to make more stories like Shannon's possible, and we have a chance to do it with the bipartisan bill that Senator RUBIO and I have.

If you go home to your State as a U.S. Senator, and you visit and ask local healthcare providers, they are going to tell you the same thing from one corner of America to the other corner: We are in desperate need of medical professionals to care for people who are underserved now.

What are we going to do about it? What is the Senate going to do about it? What will our generation do about it? Can we put together the resources now to meet these shortages and needs in the healthcare workforce? That is the challenge that we face.

The National Health Service Corps is up for reauthorization this fall. I will be working with the HELP chair, BERNIE SANDERS, and Ranking Member BILL CASSIDY to pass our legislation.

SIREN ACT

Mr. President, there is one last point I would like to make. It was several years ago that I was visited by a couple of emergency medical service personnel from Illinois, Mark and Mavis Kennedy. They are EMTs in Nauvoo, IL, a storied and historic town on the western part of downstate Illinois. They told us about trying to provide ambulance and emergency health services in a rural county, in this case Hancock County, where Nauvoo is located.

They talked about the expense of upgrading the equipment in their ambulances so that they can make sure that the person that they were trying to help gets all the necessary medical care on their way to the hospital. They dreamed up an idea. I want to credit the Kennedys of Nauvoo, as well as Andrew Jackson, the fire chief in Magnolia, and many others who said: Why don't we have a grant program specifically for our equipment in these ambulances and for the training of emergency medical personnel?

At the time, we were debating the farm bill. I think it was about 4 or 5 years ago. I went to the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Senator Pat Roberts of rural Kansas, and said to him: Pat, I think we have got an idea here that is going to help communities not only in our States but across the Nation. He generously agreed to serve as my cosponsor on a bill that we called SIREN Act.

The SIREN Act said to these ambulance services and emergency medical responders: You can apply for assistance and help to the Federal Government, and we will try to help you buy the new equipment you need to make sure that your ambulance is right where it needs to be.

You have to understand, if you don't live in a rural area, that some of these

ambulance services are really the difference between life and death. They are the first responders. In fact, they are the only responders. They come to scenes across smalltown America and provide the kind of medical services to keep people alive for those precious minutes on their way to a hospital. So the idea of giving them the best and most modern equipment makes all the difference in the world.

Well, thanks to Senator Roberts, who has since retired from the State of Kansas, we included the SIREN Act in the farm bill several years ago.

I have talked to Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan, who is now the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, and told her that I hope we can reauthorize this program in the next farm bill. She supports it. I am going to talk to the Republicans on the committee as well. I hope that we can do that.

What we have done has been able to make grants available: First, \$5 million in fiscal year 2020, \$10½ million in 2023, and we hope to go higher in the years to come.

Does it make any difference?

Just a few minutes ago, Mark and Mavis Kennedy of Nauvoo, IL, were in my office. They were in uniform, and they are very proud of the work that they do in Hancock County. Because of the assistance that we provided to them on one of their applications, they have been able to extend their emergency medical services to virtually all the towns in Hancock County. What it means for their ambulance service is, instead of 140 calls a year, they are now receiving 361—virtually a call every single day for services—and they have the equipment and the personnel well trained by the same SIREN Act to respond and save lives as they are transporting people who live in that county to nearby hospitals.

If it is someone you love in your family who is in desperate medical need, if it is your child or your grandchild or your parents, and you have that one phone call to make, you want that ambulance there as quickly as possible and the people on board as well trained as possible. The SIREN Act does that.

It is small by Federal standards. I hope it will increase in the years ahead. But it just proves that, when people are willing to sacrifice and volunteer to help in local communities and we stand by them and give them a helping hand, it is the difference between life and death.

I hope all of my colleagues will join us in this effort to reauthorize the SIREN Act as part of our commitment to increase healthcare personnel and their qualifications across the United States.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

SENATE INSTITUTIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in January of this year, a former Democratic

Senator penned an op-ed urging Democrats to do away with the Senate tradition of blue slips. This was followed within weeks by an editorial from the New York Times and an op-ed in the Washington Post making similar arguments.

While the Democratic chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee has indicated his desire to maintain the blue slip process, talk of abandoning blue slips remains concerning, especially given Democrats' attempt last year to do away with the legislative filibuster, a mainstay of Senate procedure and a guarantor of minority party representation.

Blue slips—so-called because they are literally blue slips of paper requesting perspective on judicial nominees from their home State Senators—are a long-time Senate tradition. They serve the important function of ensuring that Senators are consulted about judicial appointments from their State, and that is particularly relevant when it comes to nominees to serve as Federal district court judges.

The Founders set up the Senate in such a way as to provide a voice for States in the national legislature, and Senators continue to provide a voice for a whole State in a way that a Representative in the House of Representatives does not simply because he or she only represents a single district.

State representation is of particular relevance when it comes to the most numerous type of judicial nominee, and that is Federal district court judges. Unlike circuit court judges or Supreme Court Justices, Federal district court judges are responsible for a limited physical jurisdiction that is entirely contained within a single State, and they are regularly required to interpret State law as well as Federal law. Now, given that fact, Senators, as the representatives of their States, should have a particular say in who will receive a lifetime appointment to interpret their State's laws.

The Constitution gives the President the power to appoint judges by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and the blue slip process in the Senate encourages Presidents to seek that advice—not to just send a nominee over to the Senate for consideration and vote but to actually discuss a nominee with the relevant home State Senators before sending that name over.

Blue slips also serve as a check on more extreme or problematic nominees, first, by encouraging the President not to nominate excessively controversial candidates, and second, by providing a way for home State Senators to block a nomination for their State if the President does nominate someone problematic.

Senators of both parties regularly return blue slips for judicial nominees; in other words, they sign off on the nomination of judicial nominees who would not be their first choice but whom they recognize as suitable to sit on the

bench. When the nominee in question has problems beyond just not being a home State Senator's preference, blue slips have provided a way for Senators of both parties to stop the nomination.

In the pieces that have come out in support of abolishing the blue slip process, I have noticed two strands of thought in particular: one, that things have gotten so partisan that we should just do away with things that are meant to foster bipartisanship, and two, that doing away with blue slips is worth it for the political goal to be achieved, and that is getting more Democratic judicial nominees confirmed.

When it comes to the first, the idea that things have gotten so partisan that we should just give up and embrace it, I would say that I think the last solution—the last solution—to increased partisanship is to abolish measures that promote collaboration and comity.

Now, we have seen a lot of virulent partisanship around here lately, but the truth is that bipartisanship still exists even though it may not always receive the same kind of sensational coverage that major disputes between the parties receive. And anything that promotes bipartisanship, that encourages Members of both parties to work together, to listen to each other's concerns, and to compromise when possible, is a good thing.

But while I may not agree that the solution to increased partisanship is to just give in to it, I am really troubled by the second idea put forward by those who want to abolish blue slips: that it is worth abandoning a significant Senate tradition—a tradition that promotes compromise, checks unfettered majority power, and serves as a critical check on the President—for the sake of temporary political gain.

This, of course, is hardly the first time we have seen this attitude during the Biden administration. We have also seen it displayed with Democrats' attempt to abolish the legislative filibuster, the Senate rule that today almost unquestionably does more than anything else to preserve the Founders' vision of the Senate as a place of stability and deliberation and a check on the power of faction.

I will be frank. The legislative filibuster can be frustrating in the extreme. When Republicans were in control of the Senate, we took multiple votes on the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, a piece of legislation that would enshrine what should be the most commonsense thing imaginable, and that is that a living, breathing child born after a botched abortion should be granted protection. The Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act would have passed without the legislative filibuster.

So there is no question that the filibuster can stop good legislation from getting passed just as a blue slip could prevent a good judge from being confirmed, but that is not a reason to do

away with either of these Senate procedures, and above all, it is not a reason to do away with the legislative filibuster.

Yeah, the filibuster can be frustrating, and it can certainly be used to stop good bills, like the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, but it is a powerful protection against bad legislation. Without the legislative filibuster, there is very little, if anything, to prevent terrible legislation from getting passed by an extremely narrow or even merely technical Senate majority.

The legislative filibuster offers a host of other benefits. It encourages compromise, it discourages extremism, and it provides a voice for Americans represented by whatever party is in the minority, who also deserve representation. The Founders knew that tyranny didn't just come in the form of individual despots and dictators. They knew that majorities could be tyrants as well and trample on the rights of Americans in the minority, and the legislative filibuster helps guard against that.

So I believe very firmly in the Senate rules and traditions that preserve the Founders' vision of the Senate as a place of consensus and deliberation and that help prevent tyrannical majorities from trampling on rights and representation for members of the minority.

While the legislative filibuster or the blue slip process may prevent a good piece of legislation from getting passed or a good nominee from getting confirmed, the alternative—the alternative—which is a system without meaningful representation for the minority party and the Americans it represents, without a meaningful check on extreme nominees or legislation that threatens our constitutional rights is, in fact, much, much worse.

So before Democrats think about abolishing key Senate protections against extremism or the tyranny of the majority, I hope they will consider what things might look like when they are once again in the minority and they want to stop a nominee or piece of legislation that they view as dangerous or extreme, and I hope they will decide in favor of checks and balances in Senate institutions.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TESTER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2023

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, Montanans proudly serve in our Armed Forces at one of the highest rates in the Nation. These veterans put their lives on the line to defend our freedoms every day. Their families make sacrifices too. These veterans and their survivors, who depend on VA benefits, deserve certainty when it comes to providing for their families.

As chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am proud to have introduced bipartisan legislation with my good friend JERRY MORAN to ensure that these benefits are keeping pace with the cost of living. This bill, the Veterans' Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act, is legislation that must pass.

Each year, millions of disabled veterans, surviving spouses, and their children rely on tax-free compensation for disabilities sustained during their military service. This income helps cover groceries and prescription medications, rent and electrical bills. It also helps veterans replace clothing damaged by their prosthetic or orthopedic devices.

Our bill directs the VA to increase veterans' compensation so that folks across the country—including 30,000 veterans in Montana and survivors—get the support they need to stay afloat. At a time when many Montanans are struggling with rising costs, from housing, to healthcare, to groceries, this cost-of-living increase will help give our veterans a little more peace of mind.

Today, we have the opportunity to put political differences aside and come together for the men and women who risk their lives for this country. Let's pass this bill.

With that, I will turn it over to my friend Senator JERRY MORAN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I rise today to join the chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs in asking that the Senate pass the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment—COLA—Act of 2023.

This is not the first time we have done this. This is an annual occurrence, and it is good to be back and suggesting to my colleagues that this nonpartisan bill—that we once again come together to pass it this year, 2023.

This legislation makes certain that the VA's compensation benefits, which millions of veterans—thousands of Kansans—receive and which their survivors rely on, keep pace with Social Security and are adjusted to match the Consumer Price Index.

As we enter another year of crushing inflation—as we unfortunately enter another year of crushing inflation—

this commonsense legislation is necessary so that veterans and survivors are able to keep pace with rising costs, make ends meet, and continue to receive the support they have earned and deserve.

Yesterday, March 29, was National Vietnam War Veterans Day and the 50th anniversary of the last combat troops leaving Vietnam. This is an opportune time for us as a Senate, as a Congress, as a country to once again commit to making certain that veterans and their survivors receive the due support, the due respect, and the due recognition they deserve.

I want to take a moment to address a concern that veterans have brought to me regarding a December 22 report from the Congressional Budget Office and a proposal that was put forth to means test veterans' disability benefits. I do not support this idea, nor am I aware of any Member of Congress who is pursuing that idea, but it is running around on social media. If we can assure our veterans that is not a likelihood, that is a valuable thing to do and provide them some certainty and eliminate some fear they and their families may have.

Let me assure veterans and their loved ones right now I would oppose any legislation to enact that proposal.

As ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I know it is our responsibility not only in our committee but within this Senate Chamber to take care of our veterans—many of whom rely upon the Department of Veterans Affairs for financial support. This bill once again this year will help do that. I appreciate the cooperation from the chairman of the committee.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Senator MORAN, I appreciate your comments on means testing. It is absolutely a nonstarter. That information is revolving around on the Hill, and it is best to nip it in the bud, so thank you for that.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 777.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 777) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2023, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. TESTER. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 777) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 777

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2023" or the "Veterans' COLA Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2023, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2023, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—Each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2023, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2024.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, the Senate has just come together to do our job by Passing the Veterans' COLA Act. We would now urge our House colleagues to quickly follow suit. Let's continue to show our fighting men and women that when you get sent off to war, it is with the promise that you will be cared for when you return home, not through words but by action.